











STEAKHOUSE DINNER FOR TWO

All About Beef Steaks

Which steak to buy? Here are 10 of the test kitchen's favorite beef steaks with tips for how to use them. We indicate the primal cut from which the steak is cut and rate each steak on a scale of 1 to 4 stars in terms of flavor and tenderness.

	TYPE	TENDERNESS	FLAVOR
	Top Blade Steak (Chuck/Shoulder) Top blade (or simply blade) steak is a small shoulder cut. This all-purpose steak is very tender and richly flavored, but a line of gristle that runs through the center of the meat makes it a poor option for serving whole. Remove the gristle and use the meat in stir-fries, kebabs, or stews.	★★★	★★★★
	Shoulder Steak (Chuck/Shoulder) Sometimes labeled as London broil or chuck steak, this 1½- to 2-pound boneless steak is a great value for cost-conscious cooks. It is relatively lean, with a moderately beefy flavor. Since this steak can be a bit tough, it should be sliced thin on the bias after cooking. Grill or pan-roast.	★★	★★
	Rib-Eye Steak (Rib) Cut from the rib area just behind the shoulder, a rib-eye steak is essentially a boneless piece of prime rib. This pricey, fat-streaked steak is tender, juicy, and ultrabeefy. Rib eyes are sometimes labeled Spencer steaks in the West and Delmonico steaks in the East. Grill, pan-sear, or broil.	★★★	★★★★★
	Strip Steak (Short Loin) Available both boneless and bone-in, this moderately expensive steak is also called top loin, shell, sirloin strip, Kansas City strip, or New York strip. Cut from the shell muscle that runs along the middle of the steer's back, strip steaks are well marbled, with a tight grain, pleasantly chewy texture, and big, beefy flavor. Grill, pan-sear, or broil.	★★★	★★★★★
	Flank Steak (Flank) Flank steak is a large, flat cut from the underside of the cow, with a distinct longitudinal grain. Flank steak is thin and cooks quickly, making it ideal for the grill. Although very flavorful, flank is slightly chewy. It should not be cooked past medium and should always be sliced thin across the grain. Grill, pan-sear, or slice thinly and stir-fry.	★★	★★★★

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	TYPE	TENDERNESS	FLAVOR
	Tenderloin Steak (Short Loin) Cut from the center of the back, the tenderloin is the most tender (and most expensive) cut of the cow. Depending on their thickness, tenderloin steaks may be labeled filet mignon, Châteaubriand, or tournedos. Tenderloin steaks are very tender, but they have little flavor. Grill, pan-sear, or broil.	★★★★	★
	T-Bone Steak (Short Loin) A classic grilling steak, this cut is named for the T-shaped bone that runs through the meat and separates two muscles: the flavorful strip and the buttery tenderloin. Because the tenderloin is small and will cook more quickly than the strip, this side should be positioned over the cooler side of the fire when grilling. Grill.	★★★	★★★★★
	Porterhouse Steak (Short Loin) The porterhouse is really just a huge T-bone steak with a larger tenderloin section, which accounts for its higher price. It is cut farther back on the animal than the T-bone. Like the T-bone steak, the porterhouse steak, with both strip and tenderloin sections, has well-balanced flavor and texture. Grill.	★★★★	★★★★★
	Top Sirloin Steak (Sirloin) Cut from the hip, this steak (along with its bone-in version, round-bone steak) is sometimes called New York sirloin steak or sirloin butt. It is a large, inexpensive steak with decent tenderness and flavor, but do not confuse it with the superior strip steak. Slice thin against the grain after cooking. Grill or pan-sear.	★★	★★
	Flap Meat Sirloin Steak (Sirloin) Cut from the area just before the hip, this large (upward of 2½ pounds), rectangular steak is most often sold in strips or cubes. We suggest you buy the whole steak and cut it yourself. Though not particularly tender, flap meat has a distinct grain and a robust beefiness. Slice thin against the grain after cooking. Grill, pan-roast (whole), or pan-sear (strips).	★★	★★★★